

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

March 8, 1999

LB 149

informed and the Appropriations Committee informed. That's the process that is currently in place and so, unless you come in and have a bill to change that, which no one has, that is the process that is in place today. And I don't know if I could say that...if I could say that three or four different ways to help you understand that, I'd be willing to do it, but we are on autopilot. Being on the Appropriations Committee, you are on autopilot. It is very...it's a very important point for you to understand. Schools are certified in December. That's over. It's done. And from that time forward, we are on autopilot. And so I think that it's critical for everyone here to understand that process. In November, the Department of Ed is told the number. In December, currently, with this bill that will move to February, but currently what has happened, in December that number is certified to schools. Following that, the Governor is given the number and the Appropriations Committee is given the number. Is that correct, Senator Wehrbein? You could just shake your head. Senator Wehrbein shakes his head "yes." That is the process that's in place. It's very important to understand that. The only change this bill would do is, rather than Tom Bergquist coming up with that number, is looking that that local effort rate is set in the formula. It is the same time frame and the same autopilot that Senator Brown was talking about. Other than that, Senator Brown, the other thing, there is an auditing process. It happens every year on the respin. That's what the respin is. That's the auditing process. And so, yes, schools are certified the amount of aid that they are going to get; a year later there's an auditing process. Why could we not have this earlier? Normally, and I think others have said this, this takes a great deal of time. Next year, if we pass 149, Senator Brown, they will have an entire year to work on getting to the February 1 date. When they...when the numbers come in from the school districts, when they file their reports, they then...and they get the information from the Revenue Department, they then will be able to begin the process, and I'm not sure actually if it's a full year, but they have a great deal of time to, and that's the amount of time they normally take. By asking them to do this in a short...that's why asking them to do this in the short time frame took some time in order for them to get that done. So I hope I've clarified those points for you and I...I think it's important, when we hear information that may or may